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REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Shakespearean Playhouses. A History of English Theatres from the Beginnings to the Restoration. By JOSEPH QUINCY ADAMS. Boston, New York, and Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1917. Pp. xiv+473.

Our knowledge of the Shakespearean playhouses and of the companies associated with them has been so vastly increased in recent years that all general studies of the subject more than a decade old are entirely inadequate. Moreover, so great has been the mass of the scattering articles and books on the subject that it has been impossible for any but the specialist to keep in touch with the field, and he has found difficulty in digesting the burdensome details. Professor Adams' *Shakespearean Playhouses* supplies just the book that was needed—a systematic survey of the whole field. The work is excellent in all its various phases. Good judgment has been shown in the correlation of scattered details and the necessary correction of false theories in the light of all the evidence. Indeed the clearness of the whole presentation—toward which a series of pictures, maps, and plans contributes decidedly—could have been achieved only by a complete master of the material. For instance, in the simple and direct presentation of evidence derived from voluminous and complicated documents, the studies of "The Theatre" (chap. iii) and of "The First Blackfriars" (chap. v) amount to fresh investigations. Many new facts also have been contributed by Professor Adams. Most notable is his reconstruction of the history of "The Cockpit-in-Court, or Theatre Royal at Whitehall" (chap. xx), a theater that has hitherto been confused with the Cockpit in Drury Lane or other buildings that bore the name of Cockpit (p. 408, n. 2).

Naturally a few minor gaps in the work could be pointed out. In connection with the history of the Bear Garden some account should have been given of Ralph, Thomas, and Edward Bowes, in succession Masters of "her Majesties Game at Paris Garden" from the early seventies until 1586 at least, and of the many occasions on which they brought the "game" before Queen Elizabeth (*Acts of the Privy Council*, 1571-5, pp. 185, 257, 391; 1575-7, pp. 9, 121, 154, 335, 360; 1577-8, p. 148; 1578-80, pp. 70, 392; 1580-1, p. 321; 1581-2, pp. 115, 311; 1586-7, p. 150). Some further notice of the forerunners of the Shakespearean theater outside of the inns would be of interest. Before 1526 Rastell erected in Finsbury Field some sort of fairly permanent stage, and conducted a theatrical enterprise for several years (cf. *Modern Philology*, XIII, 557, and Pollard, *Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse* 503]

[New English Garner], pp. 307-21), thus anticipating by half a century Burbage's venture in the same region. There are also many instances recorded of buildings used as theaters before the time of the regular theaters, besides the "theatrum" of 1348 (misprinted 1548) at Exeter and the "game-house" of 1538 at Yarmouth noted by Adams (p. 44, n. 5). Thus on the suppression of the convent of the Black Friars at Norwich about 1540 the citizens petitioned, "To make of the churche a fayre and large halle . . . for their common assemblages as often as shall be expedient, as they have always used it, tyme out of mynde"; in 1547 repairs were made after a riot at an interlude, and we hear of performances of plays in the building much later (*Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, XIV, 118-20). Such houses at London are indicated by an entry in 1566-7 among receipts in the churchwardens' accounts of St. Botolph without Aldersgate: "And wyth 22/2 for money by them receyved for the hyer of Tryntie Halle for playes, the warmanthe inquest [wardmote], and other assemblyes within the time of this accompt" (Fothergill, 10 *Notes and Queries*, VI, 287). The constant reference to buildings in connection with playing-places at inns (Adams, pp. 6-17) suggests that before the era of the regular theaters buildings for general assembly may have been erected in connection with inns, though in many cases the reference is probably to nothing more than a stage built in the innyard or large hall.

The nature of the field is such that no treatise can be considered final while the possibility remains of discovering new evidence, but it will be long, I believe, before Professor Adams' scholarly, orderly, and well-proportioned treatment is superseded.

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